



ISDH Volunteers Connect With Public at State Fair

ISDH employees from a variety of programs and divisions have made time within their work schedules to communicate with the public at the 2001 Indiana State Fair, August 8-19.

Their goal is to heighten public awareness of a number of important public health issues in one-to-one contacts.

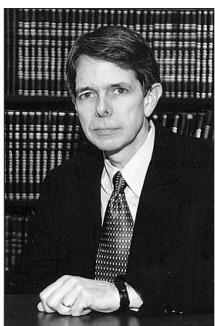
Public health disease prevention has been highlighted. Special exhibits staffed by the ISDH volunteers have focused on nutrition; food safety; tobacco use prevention and cessation; the identification of ticks, the diseases they carry, and safety recommendations when in the outdoors. Attention has also been focused on how ISDH's Local Liaison Office helps rural Indiana communities obtain needed health care and medical services—



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VOLUNTEER RON CLARK, ISDH Indoor Air and Radiologic Health, administers tobacco hazards quiz to young State Fair attendee. The quiz was designed to discourage the start of youthful smoking.

A Word From the Commissioner . . .



GREG WILSON, M.D.
State Health Commissioner

As I am sure most of you are aware, the current slowdown in the economy has impacted the anticipated revenues for the state. As a result of this situation, and the two-year budget recently passed by the legislature which has a built-in deficit of half-a-billion dollars, the Governor has called for all of us in state government to look at ways to tighten our belts.

The next two years will require a great deal of flexibility on everyone's part. We actually have two initiatives that are related but independent.

First, we have to be more cost-efficient and find ways to reduce the budget deficit. More importantly, over the last six months, we have also been developing plans to make the ISDH function better by combining programs, reducing redundancy, creating more flexible working relationships, and focusing on priorities. In the future, I may ask some staff to shift their efforts to other programs as we focus on our core public health functions.

Despite the challenges we face, this is still a glass half-

full and not a glass half-empty. We have many excellent programs and our mission is unchanged. By joining together in this effort, becoming more efficient and concentrating on our priority areas, we can still advance the issue of public health in Indiana.

The Governor has established a task force to look all across state government to see where consolidation, collaboration, and sharing of resources can be accomplished. However, this performance management vision is bigger than any one task force can handle by itself. I have learned in my first six months here that you are not only dedicated but resourceful, and I am asking that you assist the Governor and me in achieving these goals. If you have ideas that will have a significant impact on the ISDH budget or the way we do business, please send them by GroupWise to my administrative assistant, Tami Barrett. (Don't bother submitting "fire the Commissioner" – it's already been submitted several times.) I believe that we are up to this most difficult challenge. Thanks in advance!

Greg Wilson, MD

State Health Commissioner

Employees Reach Citizens at State Fair



STATE FAIR—from front page

especially for those individuals and families who are uninsured or otherwise unable to obtain these services. Its projects, types of consultations, trainings, and other services are identified in a wall display.

Small “Gaspin” dog dolls have been awarded again this year to children able to give the right answer to a tobacco-hazards quiz.

The nutrition exhibit has featured a sign-up sheet for teachers to receive later mailings of nutrition education study plans with supporting classroom materials.

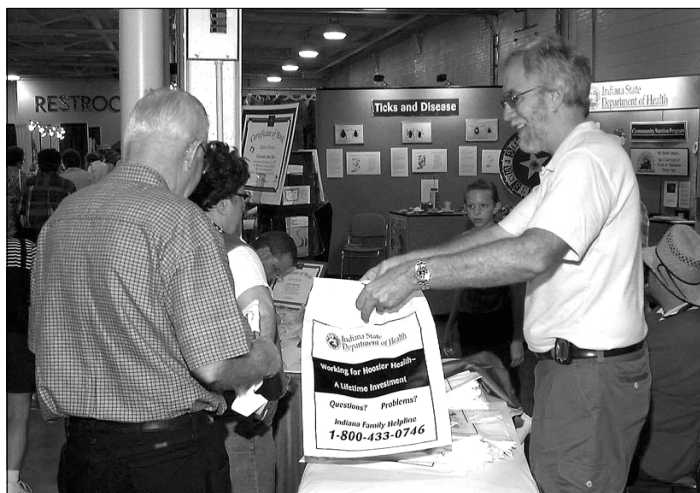
An array of handouts have been available on counters and literature kiosks for each of the topical exhibit areas. Sign-up for the oversized Heirloom Birth Certificate has also been offered.

Governor O'Bannon's Family Health Park, in a location near the northwest gate, has offered a selection of participatory physical activities, including bicycle safety training.

In keeping with a time-honored tradition dating many decades back into the 20th Century, booths have been continuously staffed by ISDH employees and friends of public health during all Fair hours to answer health-related questions posed by attendees. **More STATE FAIR photos - page 4**



CHILD SPINS THE WHEEL (upper left) for a tobacco quiz question. **Christina Farrell**, Long-Term Care (upper right) offers tick-bite-protection information. **Nellie Simpson, L.L.O.**; **Billy Smith**, Weights and Measures; and **Eloise Johnson, L.L.O.** (middle, l. to r.) field a 'pointed' question. **Bob Sunman, L.L.O.** (left), offers ISDH sack to hold health literature. A young father (above) signs up for an Heirloom Birth Certificate, displayed on kiosk.



Maternal and Child Health Grant Will Encourage Family Health After Prison

A new federal grant will coordinate the delivery of comprehensive health assistance to incarcerated women and their families for up to one year after the offender's release from Indiana Women's Prison (IWP). This is according to Maureen McLean, ISDH Maternal and Child Health Program, one of the grant's developers. The grant—one of only six awarded nationally—was made by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The award amount is \$300,000 to cover three years.

It will establish a pilot program at IWP called "Incarcerated Women's Passport for Healthy Families." The program builds on the existing Family Preservation Program at the prison, which was established by ISDH together with Indiana's Department of Correction (DOC) and Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) in 1996. The new program is designed to improve the coordination of existing women's health services provided by ISDH, DOC, and FSSA for the offenders and their children during and following the period of incarceration.

The system of care coordination will be strengthened by reducing paperwork and duplication of effort, and by enhancing coordination of networked social services to prevent missed opportunities.

The program is important since it will serve a significant and growing segment of underserved Hoosiers comprising incarcerated women and their children.

The project's director, Janet Schadee, said, "Our objective is to interface with each woman the minute she comes through that prison door and begin to provide wraparound services not only to the offender but also to her children and other family members." Timing is important because incarceration is often so short (as little as three months) that service providers don't have time



GRANT WRITERS are (l. to r.) Rhonda Shipley, grant coordinator, DOC; Maureen McLean, an ISDH Maternal and Child Health program director; Diane Roberts, formerly director of the Family Preservation Program, DOC; and Janet Schadee, current director of the Family Preservation Program, DOC, who will direct the newly expanded program.

to follow through on a full range of needed services during the period of incarceration. By extending care beyond incarceration, more women and their families will have continuing access to health-care services for which they are already eligible upon release.



IWP SUPERINTENDENT Dana Blank (center) discusses pregnancy and family issues with two incarcerated women. Photo Courtesy Indiana DOC

An important purpose of the program is to break the cycle of inadvertent victimization of children of incarcerated women. By extending health-care services to the families of incarcerated women, the program developers hope to reduce the number of these children who are at greater risk of entering prison themselves someday.

How will this happen? The transition and discharge coordinators at IWP will begin developing an integrated computer system connected to all relevant state agencies, with the idea that collaboration will encourage more effective participation by the offenders. Parole officers will also have access to better information about women and their families, with less paperwork, and be able to implement services more quickly.

Schadee points out that an impor-

tant element of the program will be working with families even when released women run into trouble. In a recent case, the family members of a woman murdered shortly after release were still eligible for assistance, which helped them through a difficult transition period. Many women do not take care of themselves after release, so it is

important that a strong community support system is in place to protect their children.

Through better documentation and increased linkages between programs, the grant developers both in the ISDH and DOC hope to address some increasingly serious issues affecting women in the Indiana correctional system. Schadee says her hope is to stabilize families at risk.

By bringing needed services to these women, hope for a better future will be supported. For example, when housing or substance abuse treatment and support can be arranged before release, many women and their families will be better prepared to make changes in their lives.

Schadee said, "This is a high-risk group of women that has mostly fallen through the cracks of social services. If we can effect change while they are a captive audience at the prison, so much the better for them and for their children."

Dana Blank, IWP Superintendent, said, "One mission of this facility is to try to break the cycle of incarceration for the children of offender mothers. What better way to start than with the newborns and their mothers."

With this grant, Indiana has the means to pioneer development of a new model to address the problems of this expanding population.

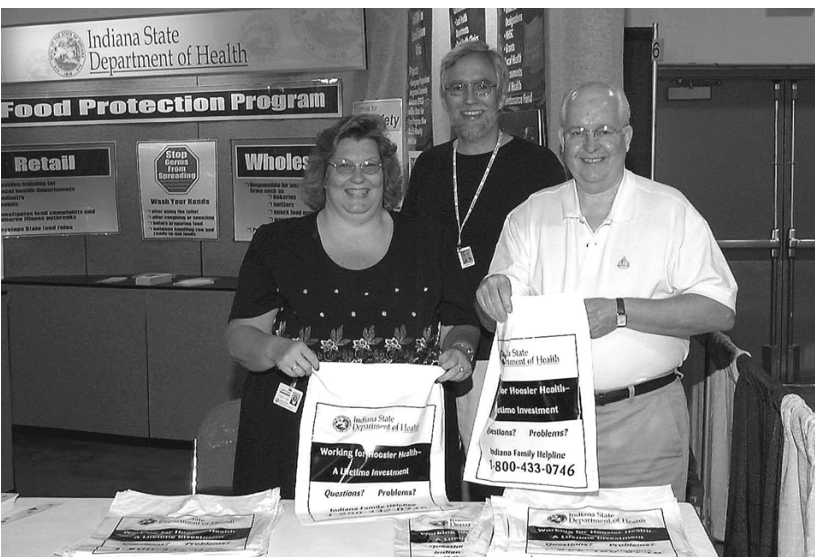
"At the end of the three-year grant, we hope to have developed a successful system of integration within MCH services that encourages other facilities across the country to take a look at the management of programs offered to all incarcerated mothers," Blank said.

— Barbara E. Cohen

ISDH Employees Reach Citizens at State Fair



FAMILY HEALTH PARK (top left) features play equipment, basketball court, and bicycle safety demonstration area. **Casey McIntire**, Governor's Council for Physical Fitness and Sports (far right in photo above left), poses with children ready to shoot some hoops. An intern dietitian, (second from left in top right photo) discusses food issues at Community Nutrition Program exhibit. Attendee (middle right) peruses food pyramid, which illustrates recommended proportional amounts of dietary fruit, vegetables, grains, dairy, and meat. Below (l. to r.), **Robin Ellison**, ISDH Legal Affairs, **Bob Sunman**, Local Liaison Office, and **Dick Bohnenkamp**, ISDH Purchasing, are ready to greet crowds of State Fair attendees.



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PHOTOS—
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All State Fair
Photos and the
photo of the
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Commissioner
on Page one
are by
Daniel Axler



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